

Amendment "B"

Amendments to the claims

Please cancel claims 20-29 and 36 (without prejudice). Please add new claims 37-65. The current status of the claims is as follows:

Claims 1-36 (cancelled).

Claim 37 (new). A method of fabricating a subterranean structure, comprising:

excavating soil to form a downward sloping ramp;

forming a concrete slab on the downward sloping ramp;

continuing to excavate soil to extend the downward sloping ramp to a location under the concrete slab;

continuing to form the concrete slab on the downward sloping ramp so that a subterranean structure is formed having an essentially continuous concrete slab with a first portion which is above and spaced-apart from a second portion; and

prior to the excavating, driving sheet piling to define an inner perimeter and an outer perimeter for the continuous concrete slab to thereby place the first and second portions in general vertical alignment with one another.

Claim 38 (new). The method of claim 37, and further comprising:

driving sheet piling downward from the second portion to further define the inner and outer perimeters;

continuing to excavate soil to extend the downward sloping ramp to a location under the second portion of the concrete slab; and

continuing to form the concrete slab on the downward sloping ramp so that the essentially continuous concrete slab has a third portion which is below and spaced-apart from the second portion.

1 Claim 39 (new). The method of claim 37, and wherein the soil is excavated using a
2 water jetting process.

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4 Claim 40 (new). The method of claim 37, and wherein the second portion of the
5 concrete slab is generally in alignment with the first portion of the concrete slab, and
6 the first and second portions are defined by a continuous outer perimeter and a
7 continuous inner perimeter, the method further comprising joining the first and
8 second portions with a wall element at one of the inner or outer perimeters.

9
10 Claim 41 (new). The method of claim 40, and wherein the wall element is a first wall
11 element, the method further comprising joining the first and second portions with a
12 second wall element at the other of the inner or outer perimeters.

13
14 Claim 42 (new). The method of claim 41, and wherein the inner perimeter defines a
15 closed inner area of the subterranean structure, the method further comprising
16 excavating soil out of the closed inner area.

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18 Claim 43 (new). The method of claim 42, and further comprising placing a top over
19 the closed inner area.

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21 Claim 44 (new). The method of claim 37, and further comprising forming generally
22 aligned holes in the first and second portions, and removing excavated soil by
23 passing it upwards through the generally aligned holes.

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1 Claim 45 (new). The method of claim 44, and further comprising:

2 placing a caisson liner through the generally aligned holes to define a caisson
3 between the first and second portions of the essentially continuous concrete slab;
4 and

5 filling the space between the first and second portions outside of the caisson
6 with a fill material.

7
8 Claim 46 (new). A method of fabricating a subterranean structure, comprising:

9 excavating soil to form a downward sloping ramp;
10 forming a concrete slab on the downward sloping ramp;
11 continuing to excavate soil to extend the downward sloping ramp to a location
12 under the concrete slab;

13 continuing to form the concrete slab on the downward sloping ramp so that a
14 subterranean structure is formed having an essentially continuous concrete slab with
15 a first portion which is above and spaced-apart from a second portion; and

16 forming generally aligned holes in the first and second portions, and removing
17 excavated soil by passing it upwards through the generally aligned holes.

18
19 Claim 47 (new). The method of claim 46, and further comprising:

20 placing a caisson liner through the generally aligned holes to define a caisson
21 between the first and second portions of the essentially continuous concrete slab;
22 and

23 filling the space between the first and second portions outside of the caisson
24 with a fill material.

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1 Claim 48 (new). The method of claim 46, and wherein the soil is excavated using a
2 water jetting process.

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4 Claim 49 (new). The method of claim 46, and wherein the second portion of the
5 concrete slab is generally in alignment with the first portion of the concrete slab, and
6 the first and second portions are defined by a continuous outer perimeter and a
7 continuous inner perimeter, the method further comprising joining the first and
8 second portions with a wall element at one of the inner or outer perimeters.

9
10 Claim 50 (new). The method of claim 49, and wherein the wall element is a first wall
11 element, the method further comprising joining the first and second portions with a
12 second wall element at the other of the inner or outer perimeters.

13
14 Claim 51 (new). The method of claim 50, and wherein the inner perimeter defines a
15 closed inner area of the subterranean structure, the method further comprising
16 excavating soil out of the closed inner area.

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18 Claim 52 (new). The method of claim 51, and further comprising placing a top over
19 the closed inner area.

20
21 Claim 53 (new). The method of claim 46, and wherein the concrete slab defines a
22 plurality of concrete flights defined by an inner perimeter and an outer perimeter, the
23 method further comprising attaching wall panels to at least one of the inner perimeter
24 or the outer perimeter of the concrete slab while forming a roof over the concrete
25 slab.

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1 Claim 54 (new). A method of fabricating a subterranean structure, comprising:
2 excavating soil to form a downward sloping ramp;
3 forming a concrete slab on the downward sloping ramp;
4 continuing to excavate soil to extend the downward sloping ramp to a location
5 under the concrete slab; and
6 continuing to form the concrete slab on the downward sloping ramp so that a
7 subterranean structure is formed having an essentially continuous concrete slab with
8 a first portion which is above and spaced-apart from a second portion, wherein the
9 second portion of the concrete slab is generally in alignment with the first portion of
10 the concrete slab, and wherein the first and second portions are defined by a
11 continuous outer perimeter and a continuous inner perimeter, and wherein no wall
12 element of the subterranean structure is provided until after at least some of the
13 concrete slab has been formed.

14
15 Claim 55 (new). The method of claim 54, the method further comprising joining the
16 first and second portions of the concrete slab with a wall element at one of the inner
17 or outer perimeters after the first and second portions of the concrete slab have been
18 formed.

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20 Claim 56 (new). The method of claim 55, and wherein the wall element is formed
21 using at least one of cast concrete, or sprayed concrete.

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1 Claim 57 (new). The method of claim 54, the method further comprising:

2 joining the first and second portions of the concrete slab with a first wall
3 element at the inner perimeter; and

4 joining the first and second portions of the concrete slab with a second wall
5 element at the outer perimeter, wherein the first wall element and the second wall
6 element are not provided until after the first and second portions of the concrete slab
7 have been formed.

8
9 Claim 58 (new). The method of claim 57, wherein:

10 the first wall element defines at least a portion of an inner caisson; and

11 the second wall element defines at least a portion of an outer caisson.

12
13 Claim 59 (new). The method of claim 57, wherein at least one of the first and
14 second wall elements is formed using at least one of cast concrete, or sprayed
15 concrete.

16
17 Claim 60 (new). The method of claim 57, and wherein the inner perimeter defines a
18 closed inner area of the subterranean structure, the method further comprising
19 excavating soil out of the closed inner area.

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21 Claim 61 (new). The method of claim 60, and further comprising placing a top over
22 the closed inner area.

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24 Claim 62 (new). The method of claim 54, and further comprising forming generally
25 aligned holes in the first and second portions, and removing excavated soil by
passing it upwards through the generally aligned holes.

1 Claim 63 (new). The method of claim 62, and further comprising:

2 placing a caisson liner through the generally aligned holes to define a caisson
3 between the first and second portions of the essentially continuous concrete slab;
4 and

5 filling the space between the first and second portions outside of the caisson
6 with a fill material.

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8 Claim 64 (new). The method of claim 54, and wherein the soil is excavated using a
9 water jetting process.

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11 Claim 65 (new). The method of claim 54, and further comprising:

12 continuing to excavate soil to extend the downward sloping ramp to a location
13 under the second portion of the concrete slab; and

14 continuing to form the concrete slab on the downward sloping ramp so that
15 the essentially continuous concrete slab has a third portion which is below and
16 spaced-apart from the second portion.

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18 (End of Amendment "B".)

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